

April 18, 2005 At the end of 2002 President Bush announced that the United States would rejoin UNESCO, an educational agency of the United Nations. One year later the First Lady was dispatched to Paris for a ceremony marking the end of our 20-year absence from UNESCO, where she assured the world that the US would be a “full, active and enthusiastic participant” in the organization. Rejoining UNESCO, of course, means paying for it. Our new commitment to UNESCO costs \$60 million annually for starters, fully one-quarter of the agency’s budget. Sadly, I believe the administration made this decision as a concession to our globalist critics, who decry supposed American unilateralism. UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, which sounds lofty. In truth, the agency is nothing but a mouthpiece for the usual UN causes, including international abortion and population control; politically correct UN curriculum for American schools; and UN control of federal land in America through so-called World Heritage sites. President Reagan rightly withdrew the U.S. from UNESCO in 1984, citing the organization’s financial mismanagement, blatant anti-Americanism, and general hostility to freedom. He believed the organization had become too politicized, too bloated, and too hostile to free markets. Furthermore, UNESCO enjoyed rapidly expanding budgets during the 1970s and 1980s, which President Reagan felt American taxpayers should not shoulder. President Reagan was correct in identifying UNESCO as an organization that did not act in America’s interest, and he was correct in questioning why the United States should fund 25 percent of UNESCO’s budget for that privilege. From its inception UNESCO has been openly hostile to American values, our Constitution, and western culture. Why in the world should we send tax dollars to an organization that actively promotes values so contrary to those of most Americans? To better understand the origins and ambitions of UNESCO, we need only consider a quote from Sir Julian Huxley, brother of the famous Aldous Huxley. Julian Huxley was the founding director-general of UNESCO when he said the following: “The general philosophy of UNESCO should be a scientific world humanism, global in extent... It can stress... the transfer of full sovereignty from separate nations to a world political organization... Political unification in some sort of world government will be required...to help the emergence of a single world culture.” Those who supported rejoining UNESCO claim the organization has been reformed over the years. Yet it’s strange that in two decades since the United States left UNESCO, we only started reading about purported reforms in the year 2000. Are we to believe that after nearly twenty years of business as usual, a large bureaucracy like UNESCO suddenly reinvented itself in a few short years? Is it worth spending \$60 million every year on an organization with such a terrible history of waste, corruption, and anti-Americanism? President Reagan’s politically brave withdrawal from UNESCO portended an era of greater disengagement from the United Nations itself. Congress can revitalize that worthy goal by urging the administration to rethink its terrible decision to entangle the American people with an organization as rotten as UNESCO. I recently introduced a congressional resolution urging an official withdrawal from UNESCO, and I plan to attach the resolution as an amendment to a foreign aid spending bill this summer. It will be interesting to see whether the same members of Congress who savaged the UN before the Iraq war actually vote to get America out of UNESCO.